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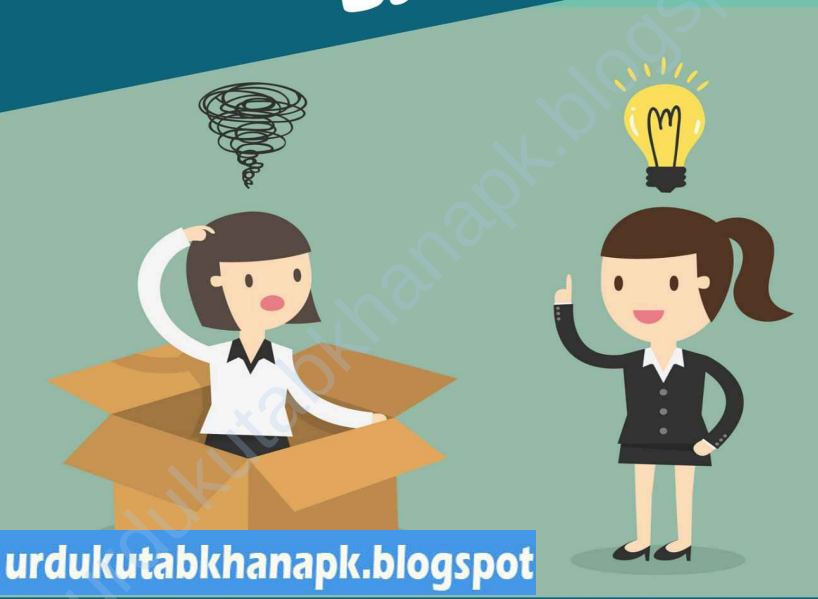

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Learn How to Use and Understand Over 125 Idioms in English

JANET GERBER

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English Idioms Explained

Learn How to Use & Understand Over 125 Idioms in English

By Janet Gerber

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This 5-Day e-course is in video format and you can access the 5-Day e-course by going here.

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Introduction

This book was written for intermediate or advanced English language learners that want to learn more idioms or expression used by native English speakers.

Learning a new language is fun and the more advanced your vocabulary is the more you will understand. In this book you will learn over 300 common idioms that you can use when speaking English. Each idiom's meaning is explained and then you will see how it is used in example sentences.

Some of the idioms you will already know and others will be new to you. While you read, think about the following questions: Are any of them similar to idioms in your language or country? Have you ever heard any of these idioms on TV or in the movies?

There are a lot of idioms in this book. Don't worry about memorizing every single one. Learn the idioms that you think you could regular basis.

About the Author:
My name is Janet Gerber. I am a teacher and language learner just like you. My goal is to help you improve your English using practical methods… I will never encourage you to memorize verb tenses or word lists.

I run the website English Tonight, where you can find English lessons and activities to help

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you learn English online in your own time.

Other books Janet Gerber has written:

How to Speak English Fluently
650+ Phrases for Everyday English Speaking
50 Sentence Starters in English
The Complete Guide to Travel English

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What is an 'Idiom'?

An 'idiom' is an expression used that has a hidden meaning. The words used in each idiom cannot be translated literally or they won't make sense.

For example; on the cover of this book there was an idiom depicted. '**Think outside the box**'. Now, if you take this expression by its literal meaning, it would be mean that someone that is inside a box should get out of the box and think outside of it. No one I know sits inside of boxes and thinks; so the meaning of the idiom '**think outside the box'** means you should think in an original or creative way.

Why are idioms difficult to understand?

Idioms are difficult to understand because you cannot understand the meaning just by understanding the words. You need to have a deeper or more advanced understanding of the language (or culture) to understand many idioms.

Idioms are also difficult because there are so many and how often they are used varies. Some people do not use very many idioms where as others seem to use idioms in every sentence. Since there are so many idioms an English language learner could become confused easily.

Also, idioms are different in every country and language. Idiomatic expressions do not carry over from one language or country to the next.

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A good example is this article that depicts 10 idiomatic expressions from around the world.

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How Idioms Improve Your English Level/Understanding

If you are learning English for a textbook, English class or on your own you are likely using generic materials that have very generic English explained. Learning idioms will help you understand and interact more naturally with native English speakers both online and off.

Idioms and idiomatic expression are fun to learn. They make speaking more fun and colorful.

Though you may be able to speak English well, knowing and understanding how to use idioms will increase your English fluency level. You will be able to use more complex expressions that are not taught in textbooks and you will be able to speak English naturally.

Once you are able to master idioms or at least increase your knowledge of commonly used idioms you will be able to sound more like a native English speaker.

What to do when you don't understand an idiom?

1. If you hear someone say an idiomatic expression that does not make sense to you; say:

-What does _____ mean?

-I don't think understand what _____ means.

At that point the person that you are talking to will help clarify what they are trying to express or will give you further explanation of what they are talking about.

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2. Use the context of what the person is saying to understand. Don't just focus on the words or idiom you don't fully understand. Look at the big picture and see if that helps you further understand.

3. Google it. When all else fails write it down or use your phone or computer to Google the meaning of something when you have a chance.

Example Search Terms:

_____ + idiom

_____ + meaning

_____ + example sentence

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Idioms with All

1-
Idiom: All ears
Meaning: listening, paying attention
Example:
Person 1: Are you listening?
Person 2: Yes, I'm all ears!

2-
Idiom: All eyes on me/ All eyes on him/All eyes on _____
Meaning: everyone looking/waiting to hear something
Example:
-All eyes on where on the mayor, as she begin her speech about the new housing project.
-All eyes were on the stage while the dancers performed.

3-
Idiom: All hell broke loose
Meaning: chaos
Example:
All hell broke loose when the fire alarm went off; people where running everywhere.
The riots in Baltimore caused **all hell to break loose** in the center of the city.

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4-

Idiom: All in a day's work

Meaning: No big deal, simple

Example:

Person 1: Thanks for helping me move.

Person 2: It's all in a day's work.

5-

Idiom: All your eggs in one basket

Meaning: Don't risk/put/gamble all your assets in one place or on one thing

Example:

Person 1: I'm going to bet all my money on the New York Yankees.

Person 2: Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

6-

Idiom: All in your head

Meaning: you are imagining something, making a big deal about something that shouldn't be

Example: Don't worry about this. It's all in your head.

7-

Idiom: All over the map

Meaning: Random, Hard to follow, incomprehensible

Examples:

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-That video was **all over the map**.
-Professor Johnson's lecture was **all over the map**.

8-
Idiom: all's well that ends well
Meaning: earlier problems don't matter because of a happy ending or outcome
Example:
-Even though the meeting had a slow start, eventually people started having a good time and dancing- **all's well that ends well**.

9-
Idiom: go all out
Meaning: put all of your energy into something; do something enthusiastically
Example:
-Veronica **went all out** on the Halloween party. She had a costume contest, games and even a haunted house.
-You have to **go all out** to win the race.

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Color Idioms

1-
Idiom: blue collared worker
Meaning: works in a factory or hard labor job
Example:
-My dad is a **blue collared worker**. He has worked for Ford Motors for 34 years.
-The restaurant is full of **blue collared workers** because it is near three factories.

2-
Idiom: give the green light
Meaning: give permission
Example:
-My boss **gave me the green light** to submit the report to our client.
-After proofreading his work, she **gave the green light** to go ahead with the project.

3-
Idiom: once in a blue moon
Meaning: very rarely, not very often
Example:
-I like to go salsa dancing **once in a blue moon.**
-Albert visits his aunt **once in a blue moon.**

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4-

Idiom: paint the town red

Meaning: have a great time

Example:

They **painted the town red** last night at the bachelorette party.

We are going to **paint the town red** tonight, because I am turning 21 years old!

5-

Idiom: see things in black and white

Meaning: no middle ground, only two possible ways

Example:

-My husband only **sees things in black and white**. He is never willing to see things in other people's eyes.

- She is so stubborn. She only **see things in black and white.**

6-

Idiom: See through rose-colored glasses

Meaning: very optimistic, very positive

Example:

-My sister **sees** the world **through rose-colored glasses**. She thinks everything is perfect.

-He looked at the world through rose-colored glasses.

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7-
Idiom: tickled pink
Meaning: very happy
Example:
I was **tickled pink** when I received flowers at the office from my husband.
She was **tickled pink** when she received a big raise at her job.

8-
Idiom: white collared worker
Meaning: works in an office
Example:
-I don't want to be a **white collared worker** all my life. Working in a cubicle drives me insane.
-The **white collared workers** poured out of the office building at 5:01pm.

9- Idiom: with flying colors
Meaning: did very well
-Wilmer passed his math exam with **flying colors**.
-Sofia studied very hard and passed the university entrance exam with **flying colors**.

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Idioms about Time

1-
Idiom: Around the corner
Meaning: coming up; soon
Examples:
- Halloween is just around the corner.
-I can't believe that Christmas is just around the corner.

2-
Idiom: crack of dawn
Meaning: very early in the morning
Examples:
-Willy has to wake up at the **crack of dawn** to get to work on time.
-Megan woke up at the **crack of dawn** in order to catch her flight to Italy.

3-
Idiom: at the eleventh hour
Meaning: at the last minute, when there is little time left
Example:
-The New York Yankees won the World Series **at the eleventh hour.**
- He bought the concert tickets **at the eleventh hour.**

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4-

Idiom: in a flash

Meaning: very quickly; immediately.

Example:

-Ellen ran outside **in a flash** when she heard the explosion.

-The bird died **in a flash** after flying into the window.

5-

Idiom: in a heartbeat

Meaning: instantly; immediately

Examples:

-The final inning of the baseball game was over **in a heartbeat**.

- He accepted the new job **in a heartbeat**.

6-

Idiom: in the nick of time

Meaning: just in time; to do something in just enough time to be successful

Examples:

-The woman was saved by a doctor just **in the nick of time**.

- The man got out of the way of the train just **in the nick of time.**

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7- Idiom: lose track of time

Meaning: forgot about time; forgot/ got distracted about the time

Examples:

-I'm sorry I'm late. I **lost track of time.**

-I always **lose track of time** when I am playing video games.

8-

Idiom: a mile a minute

Meaning: very quickly

Examples:

-Amelie talks **a mile a minute.**

-The tour guide talked **a mile a minute.** I barely understood what he said.

9-

Idiom: kill time/time to kill

Meaning: use time up; spend time aimlessly or without purpose

Examples:

-I have to **kill time** before my next flight in two hours.

-I had **time to kill** before my dinner date; so I decided to go shopping.

10-

Idiom: time heals all wounds

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Meaning: things get better with time

Example:

-Shelly is very upset because her husband cheated on her –**time heals all wounds.**

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Idioms to Express Happiness

1-
Idiom: On cloud nine
Meaning: you are on the top of the world, you feel wonderful
Examples:
-I was **on cloud nine** after I my daughter was born.
-Jeffrey was **on cloud nine** after he won the lottery.

2-
Idiom: Over the moon
Meaning: feel great, feel on top of the world
Examples:
-Amy was **over the moon** when she got engaged.
-My little sister was **over the moon** when she got a tablet for her birthday.

3-
Idiom: happy camper
Meaning: really happy
Examples:
-Tony was a **happy camper** when he got to leave work early.
-Kendall was a **happy camper** when the meeting was canceled.

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4-

Idiom: in seventh heaven

Meaning: really happy

Examples:

-I was **in seventh heaven** after eating chocolate cheesecake for dessert.

-She was **in seventh heaven** when she found out she was pregnant.

5-

Idiom: jump for joy

Meaning: be really happy/excited

Examples:

-She **jumped for joy** when completed the triathlon.

-He **jumped for joy** when he won $5,000 in the lottery.

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Idioms about Personality/Personal Characters

1-
Idiom: behind the times
Meaning: old-fashioned, does not want to change
Examples:
- My uncle is **behind the times**, he still uses a cell phone the size of a brick.
- The hotel room was **behind the times**. It didn't have a flat screen TV or air-conditioning.

2-
Idiom: busybody
Meaning: a person who meddles or pries in other people's business or problems
Examples:
- Julie is a **busybody**. She is always asking a lot of questions and gossiping about others.
- My elderly neighbor is a **busybody**. I avoid talking to her at all costs.

3-
Idiom: cheapskate
Meaning: does not like to speak money, very frugal or stingy
Examples:
- My aunt Carla would rather go hungry than buy lunch at a restaurant. She is such a **cheapskate**.
- My dad has been wearing the same clothes since the 70's. He is such a **cheapskate**. He

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would rather wear outdated clothes than spend $20 on a new shirt.

4-
Idiom: down to earth
Meaning: humble, easy going, practical, polite
Examples:
- Erica is a **down to earth** person. She has never been high maintenance like her sister.
- Jackson has been my friend since fourth grade. He is such a **down to earth** person and is easy to talk to.

5-
Idiom: go-getter
Meaning: ambitious
Examples:
- My brother is a **go-getter**; he had a multimillion dollar company by the age of thirty.
- The successful entrepreneur has been a **go-getter** since he started his business ten years ago.

6-
Idiom: know it all
Meaning: someone who thinks they know everything
Examples:
- My uncle is such a **know it all**; he thinks he knows everything.

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- My six year daughter is a **know it all**. She thinks she knows everything even when proved wrong.

7-
Idiom: party pooper
Meaning: some who has a negative attitude or actions
Examples:
- Melisa is such a **party pooper**. She is always complains about everything.
- I hate spending time with Teresa. She is such a **party pooper**. Everything that comes out of her mouth is negative.

8-
Idiom: set in ones ways
Meaning: someone who is stubborn or does not like change
Examples:
- My grandma **is set in her ways**. She still doesn't think that computers are necessary.
- My grandfather is **set in his ways**. He thinks that women should do all the cooking and cleaning around the house.

9-
Idiom: social butterfly
Meaning: a person that knows a lot of people, someone that socializes with many people or groups

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Examples:
- Missy has been a **social butterfly** since she was a little kid. She knows tons of people.
- **Social butterflies** are great people to be friends with. They can always introduce you to someone new.

10-
Idiom: worrywart
Meaning: someone who worries about everything, someone who is very anxious
Examples:
- I have been a **worrywart** all of my life. Everything makes me anxious.
- Mr. Phillips was such a **worrywart**. He always thought something bad was going to happen; though nothing ever did.

11-
Idiom: slime ball
Meaning: horrible, disputing
Examples:
-That professional basketball player is such a **slime ball**. He has ten kids with different women and doesn't support any of them.
-My Uncle Sam is such a **slime ball**. He is always hitting on women young enough to be his daughter.

12-

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Idiom: arm chair critic

Meaning: someone who is very critical, says negative comments about everything but does nothing about it

Example:

-My friend is such an **arm chair critic**. She is always complaining about the cost of her rent but never tries to find a cheaper place to live.

13-

Idiom: has a heart of gold

Meaning: friendly, sincere, generous

Examples:

-My aunt **has a heart of gold**. She volunteers three times a week at a homeless shelter.

-She is so nice. She must **have a heart of gold.**

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Business/Work Place Idioms

1-
Idiom: face the facts
Meaning: accept reality; deal the truth (usually negative)
Examples:
-You have to **face the facts**. If this company doesn't start earning money soon; we will have to go bankrupt.
-If you don't **face the facts**, you are going to lose this account for the company.

2-
Idiom: Go back to the drawing board
Meaning: start over again
Examples:
-We had to **go back to the drawing board** after the client rejected the initial design of the website.
- The marketing team had to **go back to the drawing board** after their first campaign failed.

3-
Idiom: head the team
Meaning: in charge of, the boss, lead a group
Examples:
-Marcela is going to **head the team** in the new marketing campaign.

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- Oscar **heads the team** in accounting.

4-

Idiom: get tied up

Meaning: get stuck in

Examples:

-I **got tied up** on a conference call for two hours.

-Marcos **got tied up** in the marketing department all afternoon**.**

5-

Idiom: footing the bill

Meaning: pay for

Examples:

-Who is going to foot the bill for this mistake; us or the client?

-Whoever is **footing the bill** for this retreat must be rich**.**

6-

Idiom: have an eye for (something)

Meaning: the ability to do something well

Examples:

- Tiffany **has an eye for** design.
- Pedro **has had an eye for details** since he started working here five years ago.

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7-

Idiom: in over your head

Meaning: have too much to do, have too much responsibility/ability

Examples:

-She is **in over her head** with the new account. She has so much to do and will never finish.

-I knew he was **in over his head** when he missed the big deadline.

8-

Idiom: to axe someone

Meaning: to fire someone, to get terminated from your job/position

Examples:

- Willy **got axed** from job after he got his an argument with his coworker.
- Rob **was axed** after they found out he was stealing money from the company.

9-

Idiom: back to the grind

Meaning: get back to work/routine

Examples:

- I've got to get **back to the grind** after the long weekend. I'm sure there is a lot of work piled up.
- I've been lazy lately. I better **get back to the grind** before I get fired.

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10-
Idiom: desk jockey
Meaning: stuck at desk or stuck at computer all day long
Examples:
-I hate being a **desk jockey**. I wish I had a job where I got to get out of the office.
- She has been a **desk jockey** since she was 21. That's why she can't understand why I want to work in a different field.

11-
Idiom: pick up the slack
Meaning: do work that other aren't doing/won't do
Examples:
-Alex always works late. He has to **pick up the slack** of his lazy co-workers.
-Maria had to **pick up the slack** because one of her coworkers quit.

12-
Idiom: go with the flow
Meaning: go along with whatever happens; go along as things change
Examples:
- You have to be able to **go with the flow** in this position. No day is ever the same.
- She doesn't like to **go with the flow**. She likes to be in charge of everything and doesn't like it when things change.

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13-

Idiom: (to) dot your i's and cross your t's

Meaning: to be very detail oriented; to be very careful

Examples:

- You have **to dot your i's and cross your t's** when you work with the Schultz Brothers. They always find peoples mistakes.
- If you don't **dot your i's and cross your t's** on this contract; there might be legal repercussions.

14-

Idiom: bite off more than one can chew

Meaning: take on too much; try to do too much

Examples:

-She **bit off more than she can chew** when she agreed to write the entire 100 page report by Friday.

-He **bit off more than he can chew** when he said he would compile all of the findings in a report by next week.

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Idioms about People in Businesses/Corporation

1-

Idiom: Mover and Shaker

Meaning: a powerful person who goes to many events and influences and meets many people

Examples:

-The owner of Samsung is a **mover and shaker**. He convinces people to buy his new designs and support his new projects even before they are developed.

-The head of public relations is a **mover and a shaker.** She knows how to get free publicity and a ton of people to show up at events just by making a few phones calls.

2-

Idiom: Big Fish in a little pond

Meaning: a person who is over qualified and has lots of skills or education but works for a small company or business

Example:

-Even though Dr. Martin is renowned for his work in heart surgery; he prefers to work at a small clinic than in a huge hospital in the city. Dr. Martin is a **big fish in a little pond.**

3-

Idiom: Big Cheese

Meaning: the most important person in a business/organization,

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Examples:

-Bill Gates is the **big cheese** of Microsoft.

-My cousin thinks he is the **big cheese** of his company but he is only mid-level management.

4-

Idiom: people person

Meaning: a person who enjoys or is very good at interacting with others.

Examples:

-Marcie has been a **people person** since she was a young girl. She is a true extrovert and will talk to anyone she meets.

-I'm not really a **people person**. I'd rather keep to myself than have to talk to everyone I see.

5-

Idiom: the head honcho

Meaning: the most important person in a business/organization

Examples:

-My sister is the **head honcho** of the Museum of Modern Art in Miami.

-My friend will soon be the **head honcho** of social media company in New York.

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Idioms about Men

1-
Idiom: a man of few words
Meaning: quiet man
Examples:
-My grandfather is **a man of few words.**
-Eric is **a man of few words**. He never talks a lot unless he disapproved of something; than he would let us know.

2-
Idiom: a man of his word
Meaning: someone who keeps their promise; does what they say they are going to do
Examples:
-You can trust him. He is **a man of his word.**
- Mr. Jenkins is **a man of his word**. I have known him for 25 years and he always does what he says he is going to.

3-
Idiom: a ladies man
Meaning: a man that loves spending time and flirting with women
Examples:
- You better watch out. Calvin is **a ladies man.** He never commits to one woman for very

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long.

- Jeff is **a ladies man**. The girls are always throwing themselves at him at bars and clubs.

4-

Idiom: a man of the people

Meaning: understand of need, views of the ordinary people

Examples:

-Congressman Field is **a man of the people**. He always listens to what his constituents want and need.

- Pastor Swanson is **a man of the people**. He spends most of his time helping ordinary people do better in life.

5-

Idiom: man of the hour

Meaning: someone who is receiving a lot of attention right now

Example:

-Here he is; **the man of the hour**. Let's toast to his new business venture.

6-

Idiom: family man

Meaning: a man that likes to spend time and is dedicated to his family

Examples:

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-Jason is a **family man**. He loves spending time with his three kids and wife.
-I'm not sure why he has so many kids. He is not a **family man** at all. He barely ever sees his kids.

7-
Idiom: sugar daddy
Meaning: a wealthy (rich) older man who gives gifts to young women in return for their company or sexual favors
Examples:
- Geraldine's **sugar daddy** bought her a new car after their last date.
- Marisa loves having a **sugar daddy**. Whenever she goes out with him, he buys her lots of expensive clothes and shoes that she would never be able to afford.

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Idioms about Appearance

1-
Idiom: not a hair out of place
Meaning: perfect appearance; to look perfect
Examples:
-Nathan always looks great- **not a hair out of place.**

2-
Idiom: Dressed to Kill
Meaning: wearing beautiful clothes in order to create a stunning impression
Examples:
-Charlotte was **dressed to kill**. Everyone at the ball couldn't keep their eyes off her.
-Christina appeared at the party in a beautiful blue gown. She was **dressed to kill**.

3-
Idiom: decked out
Meaning: dressed up; dressed in very nice clothes
Examples:
-Marta got all **decked out** for the Holiday Party at work.
-Petra got **decked out** for her first date with the doctor.

4-

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Idiom: pretty as a picture

Meaning: very pretty; very beautiful

Examples:

- Josie was as **pretty as a picture.**

-After Fernanda got her hair and makeup done; she was **pretty as a picture.**

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Idioms about Relationships

1-
Idiom: be an item
Meaning: to be dating; to be a couple in a romantic relationship
Examples:
-Joel and Cindy **are an item**; it only took two long years for them to officially start dating.
- Sean and Megan **are an item**. They finally made it official.

2-
Idiom: get hitched/tie the knot
Meaning: get married
Examples:
-Sam and Georgia **got hitched** in Las Vegas.
-Eric and Sara **tied the knot** last week.

3-
Idiom: cold feet
Meaning: loss of nerve; no confidence; scared (to do something)
Examples:
-Kyle had **cold feet**. He wanted to ask Lucia out on a date but he thought she would say no.
-He started to get **cold feet** on his wedding day.

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4-

Idiom: butterflies in my stomach

Meaning: to be anxious or nervous about something

Examples:

-She **gets butterflies in her stomach** every time he calls.

-I **got butterflies in my stomach** before our first date.

5-

Idiom: head over heels

Meaning: madly/really in love

Examples:

-I fell **head over heels** for Matt the first time I met him.

-Emily fell **head over heels** for Santiago.

6-

Idiom: have the hots for

Meaning: to like someone; to be attracted to someone

Examples:

-Charlie **has the hots for** Sarah.

-Mitch **has had the hots for** Stephanie since they were fifteen years old.

7-

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Idiom: have a crush on someone
Meaning: to secretly like someone; to secretly be attracted to someone
Examples:
-I **have had a crush on** my neighbor Tony since I was six years old. He is so cute.
-Little Jimmy **has a crush on** his first grade teacher. He never stops talking about how great she is.

8-
Idiom: catch someone's eye
Meaning: attract someone's attention by making eye contact with them; be noticed by someone
Examples:
-He tried to **catch her eye** from the other side of the bar.
-Her stunning looks **caught my eye**.

9-
Idiom: puppy love
Meaning: intense but relatively superficial romantic attachment usually associated with teenagers
Examples:
-Antonia and Alex are such a cute couple. It's like **puppy love** how they are together all the time.

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-Gabrielle and Mason can't get enough of each other. I hope this **puppy love** lasts.

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Idioms about Family

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1-
Idiom: black sheep of the family
Meaning: worst member of the family; outcast of the family
Examples:
-William is the **black sheep of the family**. He has never fit in.
-She is **the black sheep of the family**. She never went to university and barely ever works.

2-
Idiom: run in the family
Meaning: a characteristic that many members of the family have
Examples:
-Big noses **run in the family.**
- Even though cancer **runs in the family** doesn't mean that you will have it.

3-
Idiom: your own flesh and blood
Meaning: a member of the family
Examples:
-You should be nicer to your brother. He is **your own flesh and blood.**
- I think your step-dad forgets you are part of the family. You are **their own flesh and blood.**

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4-

Idiom: bad blood

Meaning: feeling of hate or strong dislike between people because of any arguments or problems in the past

Examples:

-There has been **bad blood** between Richard and Natalie ever since he broke up with her.

-There is **bad blood** between my grandfather and his new neighbor. They are always getting into arguments because his neighbor lets his dog poop all over my Grandpa's yard.

5-

Idiom: blood is thicker than water

Meaning: family relationships are the strongest and most important ones; be loyal to your family

Examples:

-John's wife doesn't like his brother. John better remember that **blood is thicker than water.**

-She better remember that **blood is thicker than water**. She thinks her friends have good intentions but they are really pulling her away from her family.

6-

Idiom: a chip off the old block

Meaning: similar to father/mother

Examples:

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-Peter is really a **chip off the old block**. He looks just like his father did when he was a young man.
-Sophia talks, walks and dressers just like her mom. She is **chip off the old block**.

7-
Idiom: like father, like son/ like mother, like daughter
Meaning: do something the same as parent
Example:
-Jacob decided to join the military- **like father, like son.**
-Carla got into acting- **like mother, like daughter.**

8-
Idiom: fly the coop/nest
Meaning: child leaves the family home and lives elsewhere
Examples:
-Jimmy **flew the coop** when he turned 18 years old.
-Betsy **flew the nest** as soon as she accepted a full time job in the city.

9-
Idiom: empty nesters
Meaning: adult children moved about and parents are now living alone
Examples:

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-My parents were so excited to be **empty nesters.**

-My parents don't like being **empty nesters.** They are thinking about getting a foreign exchange student to live with them.

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Idioms with the word 'Down'

1-
Idiom: down in the dumps
Meaning: feels really bad, depressed
Examples:
-Mabel was **down in the dumps** after she lost her job.
-Willy has been **down in the dumps** since he found out he failed his Physics exam.

2-
Idiom: down to the wire
Meaning: until the last moment or second
Examples:
-The World Cup game came **down to the wire** before Brazil won in the last minute.
- The basketball game came **down to the wire** until Michael Jordan made a 3-pointer in the last five seconds of the game.

3-
Idiom: down the drain
Meaning: lost forever, gone, wasted
Examples:
-All of Erick's work went **down the drain** when his computer was stolen out of his car. He lost all of his files.

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-All of her work went **down the drain** when she lost her job.

4-

Idiom: down and out

Meaning: have no money/have no support

Examples:

-Michelle was **down and out** after her house burned down.

-The Smiths were on **the down and out** after they moved to Milwaukee and couldn't find jobs.

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Animal Idioms

1-
Idiom: monkey see, monkey do
Meaning: copy; mimic
Example:
-Stop copying me! **Monkey see. Monkey do.**

2-
Idiom: monkey business
Meaning: playing around; now following the rules or laws
Examples:
-Stop this **monkey business** right now! Or you might break something.
-This **monkey business** has gone too far! You better start listening to your parents or you will have to go on time out.

3-
Idiom: I smell a rat.
Meaning: feel that something is wrong; someone saying something about you
Example:
-I wonder how she knew I said that**.- I smell a rat.**

4-

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Idiom: rat you out
Meaning: tell on you; to reveal incriminating or embarrassing information about someone
Example:
-She **ratted out** she brother after he robbed someone.
-The journalist **ratted out** all of the politicians that were involved in a money laundering ring.

5-
Idiom: rat race
Meaning: keeps you busy with doing much meaningful
Example:
-I am stuck in the **rat race.**
-I finally got out of the **rat race** when I started my own business online.

6-
Idiom: pig out
Meaning: eat a lot of food in a short amount of time
Examples:
-My grandpa **pigged out** at the buffet.
-I **pigged out** at Jonathan's birthday Party. The food was great.

7-

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Idiom: hog something
Meaning: don't share/take up
Examples:
-Stop **hogging the toys**. I want to play too.
-Don't **hog the bread**. I want some too.

8-
Idiom: dog eat dog world
Meaning: a situation where it is very competitive and you will do anything to get ahead/excel/survive
Example:
-The acting scene in Los Angeles is a **dog eat dog world-** many people will do anything to get cast in a movie.

9-
Idiom: when pigs fly
Meaning: never
Examples:
-I will call him back **when pigs fly.**
-I hate sea food. I will eat it **when pigs fly.**

10-

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Idiom: crocodile tears
Meaning: fake tears or crying; pretend to be upset
Examples:
-My daughter pretended to be upset when school was canceled but it was really **crocodile tears.**
-The boy sheds a lot of **crocodile tears** to see if his mom gives him what he wants in the store.

11-
Idiom: smell something fishy
Meaning: to seem suspicious
Examples:
-I **smell something fishy**. I think that man is up to no good.
- Something about the real estate deal seemed odd. I decided to call if off because **something smelled fishy.**

12-
Idiom: take the bull by the horns
Meaning: to deal with or confront a problem head-on/publicly
Examples:
-After I found out my wife was cheating on me; I **took the bull by the horns** and called a divorce attorney.

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-It's time to **take the bull by the horns** and complete this project before it is too late.

13-
Idiom: let the cat out of the bag
Meaning: to accidently reveal a secret
Examples:
-My sister **let the cat out of the bag** when she mentioned I was pregnant. I hadn't told anyone else the news yet.
-Kim **let the cat out of the bag** when she accidently told Mark about his surprise party.

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Cat Idioms

1-
Idiom: copycat
Meaning: someone that copies another person or thing
Examples:
-She is a **copycat.** If I wear by hair a certain way; she does too.
-People need to think of their own songs and stop being **copycats.**

2-
Idiom: raining cats and dogs
Meaning: pouring rain, raining very hard
Example:
-I thought it was supposed to be nice out today but now it's raining cats and dogs.

3-
Idiom: cats got your tongue
Meaning: someone who is having a difficult speaking, or someone who is shy and doesn't want to speak or respond
Example:
-What happened? The **cat's got your tongue**?

4-

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Idiom: cat nap
Meaning: short nap or sleep
Examples:
-I am going to take a quick **cat nap** before I make dinner.
-The baby never seems to sleep for a long time. He takes **cat naps** all day long.

5-
Idiom: curiosity killed the cat
Meaning: being curious can get you into trouble
Example:
-Stop trying to read his messages- remember **curiosity killed the cat.**

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Idioms about Sports

1-
Idiom: ahead of the pack
Meaning: in front of the rest in the group
Example:
-Marcela ran **ahead of the pack** and won the race.
-Jeffrey started slow but sprinted the last leg of the race and got **ahead of the pack.**

2-
Idiom: cover all the bases
Meaning: detailed; doesn't forget anything
Examples:
-I need to **cover all the bases** and make sure all the team members completed their part of the project.
- The marketing presentation is very detailed. I think we have **covered all of the bases.**

3-
Idiom: jump the gun
Meaning: start before you are supposed, start/do something too early/quickly
Examples:
-He **jumped the gun** and started repairing his house the same day he bought it.
- I guess I **jumped the gun** when I bought Mary a gift for her baby when I found out she was

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pregnant. I gave her a pink outfit for the baby and she just found out she is having a boy.

4-
Idiom: on the mark
Meaning: correct
Examples:
-Her speech was **on the mark.**
- His bid for cleaning services was **on the mark**. We hired his company to start cleaning our office next week.

5-
Idiom: out of left field
Meaning: comes out of nowhere; a complete surprise
Examples:
-My resignation came from **out of left field**. My boss was very surprised.
- My sister's outburst came **out of left field**. I never knew she was so passionate about global warming.

6-
Idiom: learn the ropes
Meaning: learn new things; learn new process
Examples:

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-I spent my first week in my new position **learning the ropes.**
- You have to **learn the ropes** of our advertising business if you want to land your first big client.

7-
Idiom: on the ball
Meaning: ready and able; proactive
Examples:
-Your new assistant is **on the ball**. She got back to me really quick with the information I requested.
- It's important to be **on the ball** when turning in your homework. You would hate for the teacher to give you an incomplete.

8-
Idiom: take a rain check
Meaning: accept at a later time
Examples:
-Thanks for the invitation but I'm going to **take a rain check**. I already have plans that day.
-Sounds interesting but I'm going to **take a rain check.** Have a great time.

9-
Idiom: under the table

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Meaning: illegally

Examples:

-He is always doing business **under the table** so he doesn't have to pay taxes.

-The dishwasher doesn't have papers to work so he has to be paid **under the table.**

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Idioms about Expressing Emotions

1-
Idiom: blew my top
Meaning: very angry or irate
Example:
-Ms. Peterson **blew her top** when the new cleaning lady smashed an expensive vase.
-I **blew my top** when I found out that the concert tickets were already sold out.

2-
Idiom: throw a fit
Meaning: very angry
Examples:
-My five year old daughter **threw a fit** when her favorite movie ended.
-I am going to **throw a fit** if they don't serve our food soon. I'm starving!

3-
Idiom: sick and tired
Meaning: very frustrated, very annoyed
Examples:
-I'm **sick and tired** of your attitude.
-I'm **sick and tired** of how you treat your mother. Why don't you be a little nicer? She is trying to help you out.

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4-
Idiom: giving the cold shoulder
Meaning: avoid someone, ignore someone
Example:
-She **gave me the cold shoulder** at the wedding and pretended she didn't even see me.
- He **gave me the cold shoulder** all afternoon and refused to speak to me.

5-
Idiom: worried sick
Meaning: very anxious, almost panic stricken
Example:
-I was **worried sick** about you. Why didn't you answer your phone?
-Amy was **worried sick** about her daughter after she didn't come home at her curfew.

6-
Idiom: bored to death
Meaning: extremely bored
Example:
-I was **bored to death** during the economics lecture.
-I went to a science fiction movie with my brother and I was **bored to death**. It was not my type of film.

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7-

Idiom: Keep your fingers crossed

Meaning: wishing for something to come true

Examples:

-I **kept my fingers crossed** as they were calling of the names of the people that won prizes.

-**Keep your fingers** crossed that I get this job.

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Food Idioms

1-
Idiom: Easy as pie
Meaning: something was simple or easy
Examples:
-The math homework was **easy as pie.**
-That was **easy as pie!**

2-
Idiom: piece of cake
Meaning: something was simple or easy
Examples:
-The biology exam was a **piece of cake**. I didn't even have to study.
-That was a **piece of cake**! It only took five minutes.

3-
Idiom: icing on the cake
Meaning: something extra special happens on top of something else good
Example:
-**To put icing on the cake**, she made a delicious dessert to eat after the homemade meal.
-I got the job and to **put icing on the cake;** they offered to pay me even more than I asked for!

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4-
Idiom: chew out
Meaning: scold/yell someone
Example:
-My teacher **chewed me out** for not turning in my homework all week long.
-My grandma **chewed me out** for watching too much TV.

5-
Idiom: spill the beans
Meaning: to disclose or tell a secret
Examples:
-I know you know what happened; **spill the beans**!
- **Spill the beans** and tell me what she said.

6-
Idiom: sour grapes
Meaning: refers to an attitude in which someone has a negative attitude about something because they cannot have it themselves.
Examples:
-The principal ignored the complaints about a new teacher as **sour grapes.**
-The teacher dismissed the student's complaints as **sour grapes**. Next time they would have

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to study harder for the exam.

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